

I was diagnosed with crohns disease when I was 11. At the time, my family lived in Ohio, but soon we moved to Michigan. I had always known was crohns was, because my mom has had it since she was 20 years old.

She has always had it worse than me, although I have had it pretty bad. My mom had to have surgery at a young age to get rid of potentially deadly crohns. Her bowel ruptured, and caused her to have emergency surgery to correct the problem.

Since that time, my mother has always needed to be able to rush to a nearby bathroom if the need arises. She always seems to say "I'll go there if there are bathrooms nearby I can use." This affects my whole family. Her problem is that her waste moves faster through her body than normal. When the need arises, she has to go right away. "holding it" doesn't exist to my mother.

My story is a little different. My diagnosis at 11 was a blow, but we caught it early. I was able to fix it with medicine at first. Crohns, however, does not have a cure, and we get things called flare ups. I soon had a few flare ups, all of which were suppressed with steroids. I never actually got better. I had problems with eating, and eventually ended up in an In house clinic, for having an eating disorder as a result of my disease. During my stay, my crohns had another bad flare up. They rushed me to the hospital, and told me they could try medicines again, or do the surgery. The surgery consisted of me having 8 inches of my intestine removed, 8 inches to be exact, but that didn't happen quite yet. We turned down the surgery, tried the medicine, and soon I was okay again. Not only was my flare up gone, but I could eat again. I started to gain weight, and be normal.

Not long after that though, my flare up came back, and soon I was in pain again, eating less and less. One night, I woke up very late, in extreme pain. It was the worst stomach ache I've ever had. I woke up sweating, holding my stomach, almost wailing, doubled over in pain. I stumbled out of bed, and into my parents room. I asked my dad to drive me to the hospital, and 24 hours later, I had eight inches less intestine than everybody else.

I have been great since. I gain weight, eat like a normal person, and overall have an amazing life, except one thing. My stomach moves food through my body at a faster pace than before. When I get the urge to go to the bathroom, its not just the normal pressure that everyone else feels. This is a feeling of "I need to go RIGHT NOW." It almost burns. I usually urgently move straight to a bathroom and get there just in time. I've never had an accident in public, but I'm sure I will if people tell me that I need to hold it and go somewhere else. There'll be nothing I can do, and I will be humiliated. This act, a law that says that people like me and my mom will be able to use those private bathrooms is not a luxury, it is not a want, it's a need. Its something need to avoid problems we deal with as a result of a disease. It would help me, my mom, and most importantly, people around me that have or will have crohns or colitis. This is an important thing, that could help a lot of people. It is very important that this gets passed into law. I hope on day I can say I helped in passing a law that helps people.